



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AWARDS AUSTIN WEED AND SEED SITE \$175,000 GRANT

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that the Department of Justice Community Capacity Development Office has awarded the Central East Austin Weed and Seed site a \$175,000 grant for FY 2006 to fight drug and violent crime plus improve the quality of life throughout the community. The announcement was made this morning at Chestnut Park located in the "heart" of the Central East Austin Weed and Seed site.

"I want to commend the City of Austin and the Austin Police Department for their leadership in making Austin safer for the good people who live here. The idea of this program is to first take back the neighborhoods by prosecuting that small percentage of the population that has chosen a life of crime and makes life miserable for the great majority of the people who are law abiding. Once those criminals are in jail, then through these grants, we can bring human services to the neighborhood which include crime prevention, drug treatment, and neighborhood revitalization," stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton.

The Weed and Seed program is a strategy to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in targeted high-crime neighborhoods across the country. Its based on a two-pronged approach: federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors cooperate in "weeding out" criminals who participate in violent crime and drug abuse; and "seeding" brings human services to the site, encompassing prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood revitalization.

In September, the Austin Police Department, on behalf of the Central East Austin Weed and Seed Site, applied for the federal grant. Under the Weed and Seed program, the site is expected to receive \$1 million over a five-year period. According to the program guidelines, 50% of the funding has to be spent on fighting crime and the remaining 50% must be spent on prevention, intervention and treatment programs plus neighborhood restoration projects.

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